Week 3 Journal

Working with data via a command line is more efficient in terms of understanding the products one is creating. Working on excel is quite simple, however, there are times especially when working with so much data that cleaning up the data extremely becomes time consuming. However, while working with R, data can be “cleaned” within a set of a few lines. I think that I find R to be more efficient because I can command exactly where and how data is going to be portrayed, whereas with excel, I find the code more difficult to manipulate especially with the limited templates. Being able to pick and choose which data will be portrayed from step one makes portraying data easier. In order to balance reproducibility with accessibility of analytical tools I think it’s important to explain and understand the way that is produced in general. For example, producing a simple graph to portray data will help people better understand the data and be able to reproduce either by hand, or through another analytical tool. Making graphs efficient, yet simple will ensure that people will be able to reproduce the same data with any other analytical tool.

What is the most challenging the moment with R is putting the pieces together in some areas. I think that I can understand reading the code when its available. I feel that I understand how to read and what certain commands read. However, I have trouble reproducing the code on my own. I think that there is a small gap between my understanding and being able to reproduce the graphs. Something that has helped me to is to set up the functions one by one so that I can see how they change for every step. In some way this helps me better understand what the code means. The examples provided in class are very helpful. I think that something that would be more helpful in the labs is to do some of the steps one by one so that we can see how they change with each line of code that Is added. I think I also just need to practice on my own to make sure I truly understand what and how I am doing.